

An Aspect of the Qur'aan's Miraculous Nature



In the Name of Allâh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

For a scripture to qualify as divinely revealed it must be totally accurate in its descriptions of reality: the past, the present and the future. The Qur'aan has many stories about previous prophets and their peoples. Some of these stories have elements in them that can be checked out for their accuracy. One example of the Qur'aan's precision in its historical descriptions is in the story of Prophet Yoosuf (Joseph), who was sold as a slave in Egypt, but rose to become an important official in the government, which made it possible for him to bring his whole family to live there in honor. Most historians agree that the entry of the Children of Israel into Egypt occurred when the northern half of the country was ruled by the Hyksos, Semitic invaders who were the first non-Egyptians to rule that country since the rise of the Old Kingdom. The Qur'aan always calls the Egyptian ruler who confronted Moses by the title of "Pharaoh." Every Egyptian ruler was called by this title starting from the reign of Amenhotep IV in the 14th century BC, but not before that. Yoosuf lived at least two hundred years before Amenhotep IV. The Qur'aan consistently refers to the ruler in Yoosuf's time, as "al-malik," the king:

"The king [al-malik] said, 'Bring him to me.' [Soorah Yoosuf (12):50.]

It should be noted that the Bible refers to the ruler of Joseph's time as "Pharaoh," which was an anachronism inserted by the scribes who wrote the books of the Old Testament centuries after Moses.

Bucaille, Maurice, Moses and Pharaoh: The Hebrews in Egypt, p. 176. Tokyo: NTT Mediascope, 1st ed. 1994.

This part of the chapter is based on Dr. Maurice Bucaille's book "Moses and Pharaoh. The Hebrews in Egypt"

Question on Belief (Aqeedah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. In the Quran, Allah says that shirk is the unforgivable sin. Is the punishment for major shirk similar to the punishment for minor shirk?

A. If an individual has not repented for major shirk that he has committed before the angel of death comes, that individual is destined to Hell. On the other hand if an individual is involved in minor shirk,

for example riyaa, he performs prayer and prolongs it because people are watching, that prayer is invalid, but this does not mean that all of his prayers are invalidated. If he corrects his intention, repents and then he is no longer guilty for minor shirk and therefore Allah may forgive him. But if minor shirk continues and becomes part of his character, then it will take him to Hell.

Question on Charity (Zakah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. The minimum requirement of Zakah for women's gold is 85 grams. Is Zakah only due on the amount over 85 grams or is it due on the entire amount of gold?

A. It is due on the entire amount of gold. Once a person's wealth reaches the level of Nisaab (the minimum level on which Zakah is due), then Zakah is calculated based on the whole amount

Question on Death (Mawt)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What does Islam say about putting tombstones over graves & placing dead bodies in caskets?

A. This has been prohibited in Islam, though Muslim graveyards around the world look no different from the graveyards of the Christians, Buddhists, etc. This is against the teachings of Prophet (pbuh), he forbade the building and placing of structures over the graves. The grave should be no more above the ground than the earth which the body displaces. It is enough for us to know where the grave is within the graveyard.

About placing bodies in caskets, this is not from the Sunnah and would be considered a Bidah (innovation). However in some countries where Muslims are in minorities, the laws of the country may insist that no one may be buried except within a casket. And as such we may be obliged to bury people in a box, but this does not mean that we go and spend thousands of dollars to buy a fancy casket. We do the minimum to comply with the law, we would use the cheapest wood to make a box to put the body in, after rapping the body.

Question on Death (Mawt)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What are the Islamic practices concerning mourning of the dead?

A. The principles set by the Sunnah are very clear. The mourning period of a widow is 4 months and 10 day (also stated in the Quran, Chapter 2 (Soorah Al-Baqarah), Verse 234) and for anyone else is three days. It is Islamically acceptable to pray for the dead (Janaza prayer) as well as to visit the individual's grave, but to set up a special gathering that takes place after 3, 7, 40 days or every year after the person has died, these are innovations. It is prohibited in Islam to lay the dead body to be seen by others. In Islam, we are ordered to bury a person as quickly as possible so that an obsession for mourning for the individual does not arise. Sometimes, due to the mourning of an individual, people are driven by grief to do and say things which may be displeasing to Allah and that is why Islam encourages a very quick burial.

Question on Death (Mawt)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Is there any evidence in the Quran or Sunnah which supports the chopping of heads on Friday?

A. We were instructed to carry out the cutting of hands or heads, stoning people to death, lashing, etc. in public and the greatest gathering of Muslims, excluding the two Eids and Hajj, is on Fridays. It was the practice of the Prophet (pbuh) to gather as many people from the community to witness the implementation of the Islamic law. Executing the individual was not just punishment for that individual, but it was also awareness to the people what will happen if they committed the same crime.

One of the distinguishing factors between Islamic criminal law and Western criminal justice is public executions. In the past, the west used to execute people and then they stopped. Afterwards they made an analysis that concluded that the crime level didn't decrease due to executions, so there was no reason to bring it back. However in the Muslim society, public executions does keep crime levels down and this is a fact.

It can be estimated that the population of Saudi Arabia is similar to

the population of New York City, but the number of murders which are committed in Saudi Arabia in a year are less than the number of murders which are committed in New York City in a week. One of the key factors for this is public executions.

Question on Family (Usrah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Allah has said that wives and children can become a fitnah for man, what about the opposite?

A. When Allah speaks about wives and children becoming a fitnah for man, it is obvious that the converse of the saying is also true. That is that the husband can also become a fitnah on the wife or the parents become a fitnah on the children or the child becomes a fitnah on the husband or wife. What is being said is that all things that we love dearly can become a fitnah on us when our love for them exceeds the limits that Allah has set and this can take us to hell.

Question on Family (Usrah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What are the practices that should be performed at the time of birth of a child?

A. At the time of birth of a child, it is recommended that the Athan be recited into the child's ear. There is a narration which states that the Athan be recited into the right ear and the Eqama into the left ear, but this narration is unauthentic. The Prophet (pbuh) used to chew a date and place it into the mouth of the child.

Question on Family (Usrah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What practices can be performed on the day of Aqeeqah?

A. The practices which can be performed on the day of Aqeeqah are -

1. Of course, the Aqeeqah (slaughtering of sheep on behalf of the child).
2. The shaving of the child's head and paying its weight in gold

or silver in charity.

3. Naming the child.
4. The child can be circumcised.

Question on Family (Usrah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. With regards to a new-born child's Aqeeqah, what number of animals should be slaughtered for a boy or girl.

A. The normal practice for the Aqeeqah is to slaughter 2 (goat or sheep) for a boy and 1 for a girl. However, in the case of Hasan and Hussain, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) slaughtered 1 for each of them. So it is permissible to sacrifice one or two for a boy.

One important point to remember, is that the Prophet (pbuh) stated that the sacrifice is primarily on behalf of the child, even though some individuals think that it is primarily for the family. The child benefits from the sacrifice, just as a parent prays on behalf of their child, for the child's benefit. The Prophet (pbuh) even sacrificed for himself because at the time of his birth nobody sacrificed for him. It is, therefore, permissible for Muslims to do so if it wasn't done for them at birth.

The secondary principle of sacrificing for the child, is that the parents are taking from their wealth and thanking Allah for giving them this child.

The normal practice of distributing the meat, is to give 1/3 to the poor and needy, 1/3 to neighbors and friends and 1/3 is kept by the family. But it is ultimately up to the parents to decide how it is distributed. As stated earlier, some of the meat should be given in charity, so that the blessings for this act are given to the child.

The Prophet (pbuh) recommended that the Aqeeqah be held on the 7th day after the birth of the child, but it may be done later if one does not have the opportunity. The Prophet (pbuh) said that the child is held in mortgage to the sacrifice, so that in making the sacrifice, it frees the child from something which is connected to the child, something similar to a debt. But exactly what it is, Allah knows.

Question on Family (Usrah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Can we name a baby using one of the names of Allah, like Rahman or Raheem or Akbar?

A. Some of the names are specific to Allah and these can not be taken by anybody, like Rahman. To name a child using these names, we must place Abd before it, like Abd Al-Rahman. Other names wherein Allah describes the creation by these names, like Raheem, these names can be taken by an individual. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, "The best names in the sight of Allah are Abd Allah and Abd Al-Rahman."

Fatwaas of Shaykh al-Albaanee

Translated by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

In the Name of Allaah, and may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allaah. This tape, a continuous series of *fataawaa* (rulings) of Shaykh Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee, was recorded by Abu Laylaa al-Athharee on the 7th of Sha'baan in the year 1413, corresponding to the 31st of January 1993. Shaykh Naasir has addressed a series of questions sent by the youth from the United Arab Emirates; important questions which it is hoped will benefit the *ummah*.

Questioner: What do you say, O Shaykh, about those who claim that mercy should not be asked for those who contradict the belief of the salaf like Ibn Hajar and an-Nawawee, ibn Hazm and ibn al-Jawzee and those like them from the scholars of the past, as well as those modern leaders like Hasan al-Bannah and Sayyid Qutb, considering that you are familiar with what Hasan al-Bannah wrote in his book Muthakkiraat ad-Da'wah wad-Daa'iyah, and Sayyid Qutb in Fee Thilaal al-Qur'aan.

Shaykh Naasir: We believe that rahmah (mercy); that is, a statement supplicating to Allaah to have mercy upon someone; is permissible for any Muslim and forbidden for any disbeliever. This answer refers to the belief which is held in the soul of the individual. So whoever believes that those who were mentioned in the question and those similar to them are Muslims, then the answer is known from what was said previously; that is, it is permissible to make *du'aa* (supplication) for them that Allaah has mercy on them and forgives them. And whoever considers those mentioned in the question to be non-Muslims - may Allaah not let it be so - then asking for Allaah's mercy for them would not be permissible, because mercy has been made forbidden for the disbelievers. That is the response relative to

what came in the question.

Questioner: They say that it was from the minhaj (methodology) of the salaf (pious predecessors) that they would not ask for mercy for the people of innovation. Consequently, since those who were mentioned in the original question are considered amongst the people of innovation (i.e. ahlul bid'ah), they do not ask for mercy for them.

Shaykh Naasir: We have already stated that mercy, or the supplication for mercy, is permissible for any Muslim, and not permissible for any non-Muslim. If that is correct, then the second question is without foundation. If it is not correct, then there is basis for discussion. Didn't those who have been labeled by some as among the people of innovation have salaatul janaazah prayed on them? It was from the belief of the salaf, which has been acquired by the khalaf (later generations), that we pray behind the righteous as well as the un-righteous. We also pray salaatul janaazah (funeral prayer) for any righteous or un-righteous Muslim. The disbeliever, on the other hand, has no salaatul janaazah performed for him. Therefore, those whom the question circulates around, whether or not they were among the people of innovation, should one pray salaatul janaazah for them or shouldn't one do so? I do not wish to get into a discussion on this unless I am forced to. If the answer as to whether one should pray salaatul janaazah on them or not is that one should, then the answer is finished. The subject has ended and there remains no place for conversation for the second question, as the grammarians would put it. If [you believe that] it is not acceptable to perform prayer for them, then the opportunity for discussion is open and it may proceed.

Questioner: If it is said that we do not pray for them because they are from among the innovators, what would your answer then be?

Shaykh Naasir: What is the evidence that you do not make salaah for them?

Questioner: They use as evidence the practice of the salaf and they make a distinction between sinful people and the innovators, who make innovations in the religion. The salaf did not used to make salaatul janaazah for the people of innovation, nor did they sit with them or have link with them. And on the basis of that, they made this claim.

Shaykh Naasir: What was the question?

Questioner: Whether we should make salaah for them or not.

Shaykh Naasir: No, you extended your answer to the question and missed the point. The question was “What was the evidence?” You mentioned the claim and the claim is not the same as evidence. And the claim was that salaatul janaazah should not be made for the innovating Muslim.

Questioner: There is no evidence, they only use as evidence the actions of the salaf.

Shaykh Naasir: Is the action of the salaf evidence?

Questioner: This is what they claim.

Shaykh Naasir: Where is the evidence for this evidence?

Questioner: The arguments are usually very general on this issue.

Shaykh Naasir: Didn’t the scholars of the salaf cut off certain individuals for some sin or innovation? Did that mean that they used to declare them disbelievers? No, it did not. Therefore, they ruled that they were Muslims. We do not have any in between position between the Muslim and the disbeliever. Either they are Muslims and treated as Muslims, or are disbelievers and are treated as such. We do not have any intermediary position, as claimed by the Mu’tazilites, who say that there is a place between belief and disbelief. Furthermore, may Allaah bless you my brother, this is merely a claim; that is, that the salaf did not make funeral prayers for the innovators in general. It is merely a claim which has found its way into the minds of some people, the minds of some good people, who have taken on several issues with great enthusiasm, not accompanied by correct knowledge based on the statements of Allaah and the Messenger of Allaah. I have presented to you a reality which no two people will differ on. That is, that either the individual is a Muslim or that he is a disbeliever. And the Muslim, regardless of what his state is, has salaatul janaazah performed for him. In addition, his inheritance is distributed among the inheritors, his body is washed and shrouded, and he is buried in the burial place for Muslims. If he is not a Muslim, he is thrown like a seed, and buried in the graveyard for the disbelievers. We do not have any middle position.

However, if an individual person does not make salaatul janaazah for this Muslim, or some scholar does not do so for a Muslim, that does not indicate that salaah for this individual is not permissible. This means that the individual was trying to practice some wisdom and address some point, which could not be fulfilled by other than him. As in the case of the hadeeth, which you must remember, in which

the Prophet (pbuh) had said in some of its narrations: “Make salaatul janaazah for this companion of yours.” The Prophet (pbuh) himself did not make salaah for the individual. What do you think? Is the Prophet (pbuh), who prevented himself from making salaatul janaazah for a Muslim, more significant or is a salafee scholar who refuses to pray on some Muslim more significant? The refusal of the Prophet (pbuh) is more important. If the Prophet’s refusal to pray for a Muslim does not indicate that prayer for that Muslim is prohibited, then obviously, the abandonment of the salaah by a scholar of the salaf does not indicate that one should not make salaatul janaazah for the individual. Furthermore, if it did indicate that salaah should not be performed for him, does that then mean that one cannot ask for Allaah’s mercy and forgiveness for the individual, considering that we believe that that individual is a Muslim? Briefly, the refusal of some of the scholars of the salaf to pray for some Muslims because of some of their innovations does not cancel the legality of salaah for every Muslim of the like. This is because this was from the general category of warning away from an evil and indicating to those similar to them the correct manners, as the Prophet (pbuh) had done with regards to that individual who he did not pray for. The only thing that was on him [i.e the man whom the Prophet (pbuh) refused to pray for] was that he died owing a debt for some part of the war booty which he had kept for himself. The refusal of the Prophet to pray for an individual, which is more important, as well as the refusal of some of the scholars of the salaf to do so, does not negate or cancel the legality of salaah for such individuals, that is, the innovating Muslims.

From here, there is a necessary research that needs to be done. It is just as necessary for us to know who the innovator (al-mubtadi‘) is as it is for us to know who the disbeliever is. There is a question which must be asked at this point. Does anyone who falls into disbelief through actions become a disbeliever? Likewise, does the label of “innovator” in its totality apply to anyone who falls into an act of innovation, or is that not the case? If the answer is that it is not the case, then we can continue to look into the subject. And if it is not clear, then it needs to be clarified. I will repeat the issue involved in this question with additional detail. What is an innovation? A new affair or a new action which contradicts the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh). The one who does it does so desiring to increase his or her closeness to Allaah, may He be Blessed and Exalted. Does everyone who commits an innovation become an innovator?

Fatwaas of Shaykh al-Albaanee

Translated by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Questioner: No.

Shaykh Naasir: Who then is the innovator?

Questioner: One to whom clear and convincing evidence has been brought and he insists on continuing to practice the innovation which he has committed.

Shaykh Naasir: Good. So those about whom it was stated that mercy should not be asked for them, was clear evidence brought to them? Allaah knows best. What then is the foundational principle regarding them; that they are Muslims or disbelievers? It is that they are Muslims. Therefore, it is permissible for one to seek for Allaah's mercy to be on them. The foundational principle, again, is that we should be able to seek forgiveness or mercy for them. Isn't that the case? Then the issue has ended.

It is not permissible for us to adopt a *mathhab* (school of thought) today in which we say that it is not permissible to request Allaah's mercy for so-and-so, so-and-so, and so-and-so among Muslims in general, or even in particular, or with regards to the scholars amongst Muslims. Why? For two reasons, which will be a summary of what was previously said. The first reason is that they are Muslims. The second reason is that if it is that we know that they are innovators, we do not know that evidence has been brought to them and that they insisted on following the innovation and continuing in their misguidance. Because of that, I say that among the grave mistakes today is that the young practicing Muslims who firmly hold on to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, according to their belief, fall into contradicting the Qur'aan and the Sunnah without realizing it. Consequently, according to their *mathhab*, it is my right to label them as innovators, because they have gone against the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. However, I would not go against my *mathhab*; the basic principle regarding their state is that they are Muslims, and that they are not intending the innovation, and that they are not rejecting clear evidence which is brought to them. Instead, we say that they have made a mistake while seeking what is correct. And if we realize this, we will escape from many of the affairs which are prevalent at this time.

From this very same situation is that group known as *at-Takfeer wal-Hijrah*, which was in Egypt. It spread its ideas, some of which reached Syria in the days when I was there, as well as today. And we had some brothers there who were on the path of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, who were *salafees*, who were affected by this false call and

they abandoned prayer in congregation. Even *salaatul jum'ah* was abandoned. They used to make *salaah* in their homes until we had a meeting with them. We had three different sittings. The first session was between *Maghrib* and *'Isha'*, and they refused to pray behind us *salafees*. They said about myself, "We rely on your books", and in spite of that, they would not pray behind me. Why? Because we did not label those who they declared as disbelievers the same way. The second sitting was in the midst of their headquarters, and the discussion continued until the middle of the night. However, some good signs began to appear, *al-hamdulillaah*, as they began to respond to our call to the truth. So when we announced and established the prayer at almost midnight, they prayed behind us. That was the second session. Regarding the third session, it continued from after *salaatul Isha'* all the way until the *aathaan* of *Fajr*. This was the decisive sitting, and they have been with us since then, which is close to twelve years. *Al-hamdulillaah*. All it had been was mere misunderstandings, which came to them due to the lack of *fiqh* (deep understanding) of the Allaah's book and the Sunnah. Perhaps you can understand, brother Khaalid, that the *fiqh* of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah is not easy in our times today, after our inheritance of many different *mathhabs* and many, many sects in '*aqeedah* (belief) as well as in *fiqh*. Therefore, the new student of knowledge will not be able to guide them to the root of all of these differences until he goes through a very long period of study of what is now called *al-fiqh al-muqaaran* (comparative *fiqh*), and the study of the various evidences of those who have differed in the fundamental principles and the tertiary principles in the different schools of thought. In reality, it requires a long life, firstly. Secondly, it requires the guidance of the Lord of the worlds before Allaah enables the Muslim to actuate the call which the Messenger left as a *sunnah* for us to follow. He used to say in some of his night prayers, "*O Allaah, guide me in those issues regarding the truth in which people have differed. Indeed, You guide whomsoever you wish to the straight path.*" Because of all this, we advise our growing youths today, who are on the *mathhab* of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, to unite and contemplate matters carefully, and not to declare rulings based on some of the apparent meanings of the evidences. This is because it is not suitable for a Muslim to stop at every seemingly obvious ruling. Otherwise, we would end up living in a confused state of knowledge which has no ending to it.

I think you know that the *mathhab* which is closest to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah is the *mathhab* of the people of *hadeeth*. You know that the *hadeeth* scholars relied on narrations of some innovators if they were reliable, truthful, good narrators. This means that they did not include them among the group of disbelievers, nor among those on whom the seeking of mercy for is forbidden. In fact, there are

leading scholars who are followed today, about whom no true Muslim scholar doubts that they are Muslims; people who are considered notable scholars. Despite that, they have contradicted the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and contradicted the position of the *as-salaf as-saalihi*, in a number of issues. I mean by that, for example, an-Nu'maan ibn Thaabit Abu Haneefah, may Allaah's mercy be on him, who said that *eemaan* neither increases nor decreases. He also said that it is not permissible for a Muslim to say "I am a believer, inshaa'Allaah". And if he says "inshaa'Allaah", he is not a Muslim. There is no doubt that this is an innovative statement in the religion because it is in contradiction to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. However, he did not intend an innovation. He was seeking the truth but erred. Consequently, to open this avenue of doubt about the leading Muslim scholars of the *ummah*, whether they are amongst the *salaf* or the *khalaf*, is in contradiction to what the Muslims have followed. And our Lord, Allaah the Most Great and Glorious, has said in the Qur'aan: **"Whoever goes against the Messenger after the evidence has been made clear to him and follows a path different than that of the Muslims, We will link him with whatever he has chosen. And We will put him in Hell, an evil return."**

Fatwaas of Shaykh al-Albaanee

Translated by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

I want to remind you of a reality on which there is no difference, and then I want to add to it something which the young people of our times are not thinking about. The reality is the statement of the Prophet (pbuh) mentioned in a number of *hadeeths*: *"Whoever declares a Muslim to be a disbeliever has himself disbelieved."* This is a reality in which there is no doubt. The well-known additional clarification of this *hadeeth* is found in some of the other narrations. That is, if it is that the one who has been declared a disbeliever is in fact a disbeliever, then he is correct. Otherwise, he goes back to him. This does not require any research because the *hadeeth* is very clear. However, I would like to add to it saying that in the case of someone who declares a Muslim to be an innovator, it is either that the labeled Muslim is in fact an innovator, or the one who made the declaration is himself an innovator. This is the reality which I had said to you earlier: that our young people are declaring our scholars to be innovators and they are the ones who themselves have fallen into innovation. However, they do not know; they do not intend to commit innovation. In fact, they fight innovation. The following saying of the past applies to them: *"Awradahaa Sa'dun wa Sa'dun mushtamil, maa haakatha yaa Sa'du, tooradul ibil."* Because of that, we advise our youths to hold fast to acting according to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah

within the bounds of their knowledge, and not to have the audacity to accuse others whose knowledge they cannot compare their knowledge to. Nor can they compare their understanding to these people, nor perhaps even their righteousness; that is, people like an-Nawawee and Haafith ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalaanee. Who in the Muslim world today in anywhere near these two? Leave Sayyid Qutb, because he is a regular individual. We praise him for his efforts, his *jihaad*, but this does not in any way change the fact that he was really only a writer. He had literary skills, but he was not a scholar. So there is no surprise that a number of things would come from him which contradict the correct methodology. As for those who were mentioned along with him, like an-Nawawee and ibn Hajar, it is wrong and oppressive to refer to them as being among the people of innovation. I know that they were amongst the Ash‘arites, but they did not intend to contradict the Qur‘aan and the Sunnah. It is only that they mistakenly thought two things regarding the ‘aqeedah which they had inherited from the Ash‘arites. The first is that Imaam al-Ash‘aree actually held that position, when in fact, that was only his early position because he recanted his statement. And secondly, they mistakenly thought it to be correct, when it is in fact incorrect.

Questioner: Is it correct that the scholars of the *salaf* would not declare someone to be from *Ahlus Sunnah*; that is, on the *minhaj* of the *salaf*; unless he had the characteristics of *Ahlus Sunnah*? And if he innovated, or praised those who innovated, he would be considered among them? As the scholars of the *salaf* used to say that whoever says that Allaah is not above the heavens is a Jahmite.

Shaykh Naasir: There is some of that present, but do not forget what I said earlier. That does not mean that he is not a Muslim, as was exemplified in the Prophet’s (pbuh) refusal to make *salaatul janaazah* for the one who had taken some of the booty without permission or the one who killed. This was considered a part of the educating process, but it does not mean that he was not a Muslim. Another point is that the narrations from the *salaf*, if they are not in large amounts and are not all agreeing, it is not suitable to take from a few individuals, or an individual, among them a *minhaj*. Then that methodology becomes in contradiction to the practice of the *salaf* themselves. It is well known that a Muslim does not go outside the circle of Islaam because of a sin or innovation he has done. So if we find what contradicts this basic rule, we turn to what I mentioned from the earlier explanations: that this is from the avenue of cautioning and educating. Take, for example, Imaam al-Bukhaaree and what could make us really understand who Imaam al-Bukhaaree was? Some of the scholars of *hadeeth* left Imaam al-Bukhaaree and did not narrate any narrations from him. Why? Because he used to

make a distinction between one who said that “the Qur'aan is created”—such an individual would be a misguided innovator, a disbeliever, according to the different positions held by the scholars in their expressions- and between one who says “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created”. Imaam Ahmad considered the one who says “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created” to be in the general category of the Jahmites. And based on that, some who came after the time of Imaam Ahmad made the judgement on al-Bukhaaree that one should not take narrations from him because he makes the same claim the Jahmites make. However, the Jahmites did not say “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created”; they held that the Qur'aan itself was not the word of Allaah, but one of Allaah's creations. What do we say concerning Imaam al-Bukhaaree who made this distinction and said that “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created”, as well as the statement of a *hadeeth* scholar like Imaam Ahmad, who said that whoever says that “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created” is a Jahmite? It is not possible for us to say both statements are correct, except by making a correct interpretation which follows the basic rules. Before going on, I believe that you will make a distinction along with me between one who says “the Qur'aan is created” and one who says “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created”. Correct? Then how would we respond to the statement of Imaam Ahmad when he said that whoever said “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created” is a Jahmite? There is no response except what I had mentioned to you: that it was a means of warning Muslims away from making a statement which could be used as a means by which the people of innovation and misguidance, the Jahmites, would promote their beliefs. This is because a person might say, in order to deceive those around him, “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created”, while meaning that the Qur'aan itself is created. That does not mean that every Muslim who makes this statement, that is, that “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created”, has that same evil intention - like Imaam al-Bukhaaree. He is not in need of anyone to recommend him because Allaah Himself has already done so by making his book the most accepted book in the opinion of the masses of Muslims after the book of Allaah, in spite of whatever differences they have among themselves over other issues. Therefore, when he said “my recitation of the Qur'aan is created”, he intended something which is true. However, Imaam Ahmad, out of fear, said whoever said whatever is a such and such. Therefore, that should be considered in the category of a warning and not a principle of belief, a belief that whoever said so-and-so is actually a Jahmite. If we find in some of the statements of the scholars of the *salaf* rulings stating that one who falls into an innovation is in fact an innovator, it should be taken from the point of view that it is a statement of warning and not a statement of belief. Perhaps it is also suitable to mention on this occasion the well-known statement of Imaam Maalik: “The setting

above is known, and how it is so is unknown, and asking about it is a form of innovation. So expel this man, for he is an innovator.” This famous narration took place in an occasion when a man came to Imaam Maalik and asked him about the rising above the throne, as regards to Allaah. Imaam Maalik responded, “The setting above is known, and how it is so is unknown, and asking about it is a form of innovation. So expel this man, for he is an innovator.” He did not become an innovator for merely asking about it; the man wanted to understand something. But Imaam Maalik feared that while questioning, he may make some statements which are against the belief of the *salaf*. So he told them to remove the man from the sitting. “Remove the man, for he is an innovator.” Look now how the means have differed. What do you think: if I or any other person of knowledge were asked the same thing by either the generality of Muslims or by specific groups amongst them who have more knowledge, do you think we should give the answer which Imaam Maalik gave? Would we tell the people to get him out of our gathering because he is an innovator? No. Why? Because the times are different. So the methods which were used in those times were acceptable then, but are not acceptable today because they will harm more than they will benefit. And we can add to this the principle of boycotting, which is known in Islaam. We are often asked, “So-and-so, a friend, doesn’t pray, he smokes, and he does this and that. Should we boycott him?” I say, “No, you should not boycott him because boycotting him is what he would like for you to do. Your boycotting him would not benefit him. In fact, it is the opposite, it would make him happy. And it would allow him to continue in his misguidance.” Not to mention, on this occasion, a *Shaamee* saying relative to a man who is corrupt and has abandoned prayer. This man repented and went to pray his first prayer in the *masjid* only to find the door of the *masjid* locked. His response to this was, “You’re closed, so I’ll drop the prayer.” That corrupt individual who has abandoned prayer, does he want the practicing Muslim to boycott him? This is just like the example- “You’re closed so I won’t bother to pray.” The [boycotted] man would similarly say, “I do not need his companionship; I do not want to be with him anyway.” This is because the companionship of the righteous with the corrupt prevents the latter from being free to do whatever he wants to do. The corrupt individual does not really want that. Thus, the boycotting of the un-righteous by the righteous is what the un-righteous prefers. Consequently, the Islaamically legal boycott is intended to fulfil a legal benefit, which is to teach that individual. So if the boycott in no way teaches him a lesson, but in fact, it increases him in misguidance on top of his already misguided state, in such a circumstance, boycotting is not applicable or appropriate. Consequently, today it is not suitable to imitate the methods used by the early scholars because

they did so from a position of strength and the ability to prevent. Today look at the how the situation of Muslims is. They are weak in everything. Not only in the governments, but the individuals as well. The situation is as the Prophet (pbuh) described it when he said: *“Islaam began as something strange and it will return again to become something strange, so give glad tidings to the Strangers.”* He was asked, “Who are they, O Messenger of Allaah?” He responded, *“They are people who believed, a few righteous individuals amongst many people; those who disobey them are many more than those who obey them.”* So if we open the door of boycotting and declaring people innovators, we may as well go and live in the mountains. What is obligatory on us today is to call to the way of our Lord with wise preaching and a good expression and discuss with them with that which is better.

Fatwaas of Shaykh al-Albaanee

Translated by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Questioner: In order to complete the benefit of this issue, and it is an issue about which there is a number of questions today, I will mention that they say when we advise that we should not ask for Allaah’s mercy for them, the seeking mercy for them is not compulsory, it is a permissible thing. We’re not making haraam the seeking of mercy for them. We avoid it in order that there not be any form of praise and admiration for those people of innovation. Then those who we may not say are innovators, for example, but we just do not praise them or we do not refer to them as imaams, as leading scholars. For example, if a mention is made of an-Nawawee, we do not refer to him saying “Imaam an-Nawawee said”. Or they even avoid narrating from them, or relating certain statements to them, or attributing certain statements to them. Some of the brothers narrated some third hand narrations which are from some of these, and it was said to him, “How can you narrate from these people?” The (latter) are not like those mentioned earlier, like Ibn Hajar or an-Nawawee, but people like Sayyid Qutb or Muhammad Qutb. They say, “How can you narrate from these people and it is so well known that these people are not *salafees*? So you, as a *salafee*, if you narrate from them, you are praising them and giving the impression to people that they are *salafees*.” This is a way by which the up and coming fresh students would be fooled or misinformed about these people, or perhaps cause them to become like them in innovation and deviation and being far away from the correct path. Could you please make some comments on these statements?

Shaykh Naasir: I do not believe that this is their intention, first and

foremost. And secondly, if this was in fact their intention, (I do not believe) that this is an acceptable method of educating people, or making them aware. These individuals that you referred to, do they read *Fat-hul-Baaree*, or do they not read it? Either of these two, if it is supposed, it would be considered error with regards to them. If they say we do not read it, where do they get their understanding for *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* from? With regards to explanation as well as *fiqh* understanding, understanding from the point of view of the *hadeeth*, regarding the differences as well as the terminologies, etc., they will not find amongst the commentators on *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* anywhere in the world a “*salafee*” according to their definition. If there is any commentary, it will be brief explanations of headings. As for the vast sea of knowledge contained open to anyone who opens it, it cannot be found in any of the books that have taken up the task of writing against it. In that case, they would lose a great amount of knowledge. If they meant by their statements to warn the masses of people away-warning people amongst the general things which they warn people away from- that they do not take benefit from the statements of this obvious imaam, scholar, they have lost knowledge. Even though it was possible for them to combine attaining what is good and preventing or avoiding what is harmful and corruptive, as was the way of the scholars. There is no scholar after the time of Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalaanee or an-Nawawee who could do without taking benefit from their commentaries on *Saheeh al-Bukharee* and *Saheeh Muslim*. And as the scholars took benefit from the books of these two great scholars, in a number of issues, they are Ash‘arites and they contradicted the *minhaj* of the righteous forefathers; they were able to take knowledge from these two books. Taking knowledge benefited them and avoiding it was harmful. I fear what is behind these statements-these statements mentioned- that there’s a warning against warning from their books, in which case this would be a great loss. If they say, on the other hand, no, we do take benefit from their books and we read them and we confirm them, in which case, what is the benefit of these methods; wherein they’re refusing to ask for mercy for these scholars? They are Muslims, as we stated in the beginning of our talk. Furthermore, what is the benefit from their statement that they’re not saying that it is not permissible to ask for mercy for them, but we won’t ask mercy for them. Why? Because he has committed or made an innovation? As we said earlier, not everyone who makes an innovation is considered an innovator, and not everyone who does an act of disbelief becomes a disbeliever. That individual innovation has become confused to him and for the other, disbelief has also become confused, that is that they’re not clear acts of innovation or disbelief. That so-called precaution has no benefit. Furthermore, brother, the *salafeeyah* or the *khalaf*, did the scholars from whom we have inherited this righteous call, was this their position with regards

to scholars? Was it like the position of this new group who claim *salafeeyah*? The opposite is the truth. They should be like those who preceded us to this righteous call.

Questioner: Some say that whoever commits a *bid'ah mukaffirah* leaves the circle of *ahlus Sunnah wal jamaa'ah*, and one who commits a *bid'ah mufassiqah* does not leave the circle of Muslims, even if evidence is brought to him and the person continued to do it. Would such a person be still considered the people of *ahlus Sunnah* in such a case?

Shaykh Naasir: What is the *bid'ah mukaffirah* and the *bid'ah ghayr mukaffirah*?

Questioner: The *bid'ah mukaffirah* is where the person makes a statement which is a statement of *kufr* (disbelief), like declaring that the Lord, Allaah, is not above His throne, and statements similar to that. And the *mufassiqah* is like the innovations in acts of worship, like the *mawlid*, for example.

Shaykh Naasir: This is a statement which is not correct. This statement is a product of *'ilmul kalaam*. The distinction made between innovations in *al-usool* (fundamental principles) and innovations in *al-furoo'* (secondary principles), or the *bid'ah* in *ahkaam* (laws) and *bid'ah* in *'ibaadaat* (acts of worship)- this distinction is itself innovation. What if an individual approached one of the Prophet (pbuh)'s Sunnahs like the Sunnah of fajr, and he made it four units. How would this innovation be classified? A *mufassiqah* innovation or a *mukaffirah* innovation- if he made the Sunnah four and insisted on continuing to do it?

Fatwaas of Shaykh al-Albaanee

Translated by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Questioner: According to their explanation, it would be classified as a *mufassiqah* innovation.

Shaykh Naasir: That is a nonsensical statement. Among the things which the *khalaaf*, the later generation, have inherited from the *salaf*- and by the term *salaf* here I intend a different meaning than the technical meaning which is understood amongst us- is the distinction between errors in *al-furoo'* and errors in *al-usool*. An error in secondary principles is forgivable, whereas an error in primary principles is unforgivable. The *hadeeth* whose authenticity is well-known: “*If a judge makes a ruling and strives to find the truth and is*

correct, he gets two rewards. And if he makes a mistake, he gets one reward”, that is (supposedly) in the secondary principles. As for the fundamental principles, they are not excusable. That distinction has no foundation, neither in the Qur'aan nor in the Sunnah nor among the statements of the righteous predecessors. What exists in the statements of the righteous predecessors is a strong warning against innovation in general, whether it be in ‘aqeedah or in ‘ibaadah. I mentioned earlier the reality that whoever declares a Muslim to be a disbeliever, has himself disbelieved. And I added to it that whoever declares a Muslim to be an innovator, etc. Because in reality, there is no difference to me between disbelief and innovation. If a Muslim began an innovation and the innovative reality of it was made clear to him, but he insists on doing it, as in the example which I mentioned earlier, it would be like one who denies that Allaah rose above His creation or denies that the Qur'aan is from His speech, etc. There is no difference between this or that at all, neither negatively nor positively. Positively, we would say that he has disbelieved, based on the condition that we mentioned earlier, that evidence was made clear to him. And the other has disbelieved after evidence has been brought to him. Negatively speaking, there's no declaration of disbelief or apostasy in either case, neither the first nor the second, only with the existence of the condition which was mentioned. I will go back to the statement that the Mu'tazilites and the Khaarijites coincide in some of the issues in which they went astray, and they disagree on some. For example, the Khaarijites agree with the Mu'tazilites on the position that the Qur'aan is created. The ideas coincide. And as I mentioned before, the scholars of *hadeeth* did not declare the Khawaarij to be disbelievers. Then how do we combine the ideas in our mind, that one who denies a principle of belief is a disbeliever, and one who makes an innovation in ‘ibaadah is a *faasiq* (sinner); and we have the leaders in the science of the narration of *hadeeth* narrating from the Mu'tazilites and the Khaarijites, in spite of the fact that they contradict the authentic ‘aqeedah in a number of issues. Those who say that Allaah's speech is created will also deny seeing Allaah in the next life. That denial along with the previous denial makes our previous definition applicable to them. It is disbelief. But not everyone who falls into an act of disbelief has become a disbeliever. How do we rationalize the fact that the leaders of *hadeeth* scholars and the scholars of the *salaf*, like Ibn Taymeeyah and Ibn al-Qayyim, ruled that the Khaarijites and Mu'tazilites were astray, without any doubt, but they do not refer to them as being disbelievers, apostates from their religion? Because they lay down the principle of the possibility that the issue was confused to them firstly; and that the evidence was not brought against them, secondly. Let us return to the basis of our original subject: that those people were innovators. But we do not know if they intended innovation or was evidence of their

error brought to them, etc. And that is the methodology of the scholars. They rule that the Mu'tazilites were astray, and the Khaarijites were astray, and the Ash'arites were astray in a number of issues, but they do not declare them to be disbelievers. They do not expel them from the circle of Islaam based on the possibility which was mentioned earlier. They go back to two issues. I'll mention them again. The first is that they did not intend an innovation and contradiction. Secondly, we do not know whether the evidence, proof of their error, was brought to them in a convincing way or not. Therefore, their judgment is left to Allaah, and for us is the outer judgement with regards to them, which is that they are Muslims, and they died believing in Islaam, and they were buried in the graveyards of the Muslims. Therefore, they are Muslims. Thus, the distinction made between *al-bid'ah al-mukaffirah* and *al bid'ah al-mufassiqah* mentioned, firstly, it is a linguistic, technical difference which is a product of the scholars of philosophy. And secondly, there is no evidence to support it at all. Now I'd like to close the discussion on this issue with a *hadeeth* which will point you to what I mentioned earlier, that not everyone who does an act of disbelief, or disbelief has become confused to him, becomes a disbeliever. I mean by that a *hadeeth* in *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* narrated by two great companions of the Prophet, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree and Huthayfaa ibn Yamaan. They said that Allaah's Messenger said, "There was a man among those who were before you who was on his deathbed and he gathered his children around him. He said to them, "What kind of father was I to you?" They replied, "The best of fathers." He said, "I have never done a single good deed. So when I die, burn me, crush my body, and scatter the resulting ashes on a windy day." His sons did so, but Allaah gathered his particles and asked him, "What made you do so?" He replied, "Fear of You." So Allaah forgave him. There's a question: did this man disbelieve by his statement "if Allaah were able to get a hold of me" or did he not disbelieve? He disbelieved, but Allaah forgave him. And we know from the Noble Qur'aan that Allaah will not forgive anyone who assigns partners to Him, and He forgives anything less than that for whomsoever he wishes. How do we understand this *hadeeth* in light of the obvious meaning of the Qur'aan? That He does not forgive one who assigns Him partners intentionally. What is your opinion of that condition? It is correct, but is it in the verse? No, it isn't. Where did we get it from? Thus is the *sharee'ah*. It is not taken from a single *hadeeth* or from a single verse, but is taken from a combination of all that is relevant to the issue. Consequently, it is not only in *fiqh* that it is necessary to combine all of the relevant texts until we know the abrogating and the abrogated text, and the general from the specific, and the unconditional from the conditional, etc. In fact, this is much more needed in the case of '*aqeedah*'. When the scholars explained the

verse “**Indeed Allaah will not forgive anyone who assigns partners to Him**”, they do not get into these details usually, because the issue to them is quite clear, it does not require these kinds of details. But when problems and confused issues arise at this time, the scholar is required to explain the knowledge that he has. So this man who made a will (i.e. in the above mentioned *hadeeth*) did not imagine that it contained incomparable wrong and misguidance. He sought to have himself burned in order to hide from his Lord, while Allaah said: “**He puts forth for Us a parable, and forgets his own creation. He says: ‘Who will give life to these bones when they have rotted away and become dust?’ Say: ‘He who created them the first time will give life to them. And He is all-Knowing about every creation’.**” And after that our Lord forgave him. Why? Because disbelief had not entered into the heart of that individual. It is only that he imagined his sins before Allaah and his fear of Him and that if Allaah reached him, he would give him a very severe punishment. This fear and humility blinded him from the correct ‘*aqeedah*’, and so he made that will. And the *hadeeth* is clear in the way in which He told him, “*Get up because I have forgiven you.*” Therefore, it is not suitable for us to imagine that Sayyid Qutb had fallen into *wahdatil wujood* (monism) as Ibn ‘Arabee, for example, had; that he, meaning Sayyid Qutb, intended it and his heart was set on it like Ibn ‘Arabee who misguided millions of Sufi Muslims, etc. Perhaps it was only a left over of some Sufi thought which came to his mind or to his heart while he was a prisoner, and he had not developed complete knowledge about the issue. And he wrote that statement which I was the first to criticize. We cannot rule that he was a disbeliever because we do not know that disbelief had become set in his heart or that the evidence of the error of his writing or thought was brought to him, especially while he was in his prison. I do not think that that was the case. Because of that we do not link the fact that a Muslim may do an act of disbelief with him being a disbeliever. We do not link those two issues together. That is first and foremost. And warning against this have been repeated. And certainly, we do not distinguish between innovations in ‘*aqeedah*’ and innovations in acts of worship. Both of them are either misguidance or they are disbelief. Perhaps this answer is sufficient, O Abu ‘Abdur-Rahmaan.

Questioner: Is praising the people of innovation, like at-Turaabee and people similar to him, permissible if they claim that they are serving Islaam and that they are striving for its sake?

Shaykh Naasir: The answer will vary in varying situations. If the intended meaning of “praising him” is praising a Muslim who we think is an innovator and we do not say that he is actually an innovator - after this long lecture, we can distinguish between the two

issues. If the intended meaning of praising him is defending him relative to the disbelievers, that is obligatory. If the intended meaning of praising him is beautifying his methodology and inviting people to it, then it is misguidance and will cause the misguidance of others and that is not permissible.

Questioner: Is it true what we hear that (one should) boycott in these times, or should that not be implemented?

Shaykh Naasir: He means to say it is preferable not to be implemented. What is correct is that boycotting is not implemented because the innovators and the corrupt are the majority. It would be better to say it is preferably not implemented. Perhaps the questioner intended myself. Whether he intended myself or not, I say yes, that is the case. It is better that it is not implemented. And I already said in no uncertain terms previously when I gave the *Shaami* saying.

Questioner: If there did come into existence an environment in which the majority of those in it were from *ahlus Sunnah*, and there were some elements who innovated in Allaah's religion for example, should boycotting be implemented or should it not be in this circumstance?

Shaykh Naasir: It is obligatory that we use wisdom in dealing with the situation. The faction which has the upper hand and is strong, if they boycott the faction which has deviated from the community, will that benefit the faction that is holding on firmly to the truth? Or will it harm them? Now that is relative to them. Secondly, will those who have been boycotted by the main group, will that benefit them or will it harm them? That has been previously answered. It is not appropriate or suitable that we take these issues emotionally or enthusiastically. Instead it should be done cautiously and with wisdom. For example, one of them goes off and holds a position contradictory to the rest of the group. The others quickly say this is *gheeratul Allaah* (i.e. being jealous about Allaah's law that they not be broken), so we will boycott him. It is better to be kind and gentle with him, try to guide him, advise him, etc. Be his companion for some time. Then if you give up hope and there does not seem to be any hope for him to change, first and foremost, and then it is feared that his sickness will spread to Zayd and Bakr (i.e. to others), at this point, he would be boycotted if it seems most likely that boycotting him would be the best treatment. And as it is said, the last method of treatment is isolation. Today, I do not advise or encourage the youths to boycott because it hurts and harms much more than it benefits. The biggest evidence of it is the fitnah which is presently existing in al-*Hijaaz*. They're all brought together by the call to *tawheed*, the call to

the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. But some of them have their own unique activities, either in politics or in some other ideas which were not known before from any of the people of knowledge. [These ideas] could be erroneous or they could be correct, but we're not able to bear to hear anything which is new; especially if it is an affair which is rejected in our opinion. And immediately, we begin to fight him. This is a mistake, brother. "You wish a friend who has no faults. But does sandalwood burn without smoke?" We wish if only the Ikhwaan al-Muslimeen will be with us on the principle of *tawheed* so that we would be with them. But they are not pleased with us even in the issues of '*aqeedah*'. And they say that mentioning the differences has split up the group. These brothers, from whom some group has split off or they've split off from some group, and Allaah knows best, they are with us all along the way with regards to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and the methodology of the righteous predecessors. But they have brought something new in reality, some of which is in error and some of which is correct. So why should we spread division amongst ourselves and factionalism and fanaticism when before we were one unit? So we then became two. After being two groupings, we then became three. They became fashariyyoon and surooriyyoon, etc. Allaahu Akbar. And they were not split up for anything which deserves splitting up for. There is no difference in the great issues that it could not be conceived that the *salafees* would differ in. We all know well that the *sahaabah* had differences in some issues, but their methodology was one. Thus, if one was to imagine that a group from *ahlus Sunnah wal jamaa'ah* and from the victorious group (*at-Taa'ifah al-Mansoorah*) has split off, we should take a hold of them with kindness and gentleness, brother, and we try to keep them with the *jamaa'ah*. And we do not boycott them and cut them off except if we fear from them. And that will not become apparent immediately. It is not that simply when somebody expresses an opinion, in which he goes against the opinion or position of the group that it is appropriate for us to immediately boycott that individual. It should be with done patience, until it becomes clear to us that perhaps Allaah will guide his heart or it becomes evident to us that cutting him off is the best.

Questioner: Is there anything necessary besides establishing the proof on the disbeliever for them to be classified a disbeliever, or an innovator for them to be classified an innovator, or the sinful, like convincing or removing the doubts?

Shaykh Naasir: No. This is not a necessity, but what is necessary is knowledge. It is the knowledge by which the proof is established. He (i.e. the one establishing the proof) should be an inheritor of the

Prophet (pbuh) and not any individual among the various individuals .

Questioner: Are the Jamaa‘at at-Tableegh to be considered among the sects about whom the Prophet (pbuh) spoke? Are the Ikhwaan and the Tableegh from among the sects about whom the Prophet (pbuh) informed us?

Shaykh Naasir: No, no. The Ikhwaan al-Muslimoon have in them members from all of the various factions. Among them are the Shee‘ah, etc., etc. Consequently, it is not correct to put on them a single label. Instead, we say that whoever adapts a methodology contradicting the way among their individual members, that individual would not be from the saved sect. Instead, he would be from the destroyed sect. As regards a group, I would not even say that the *salafees* are from the saved sect. The *salafees* themselves. What do you think? The judgement is made on the individual.

Question on Islamic Law (Fiqh)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What is the Islamic position on mercy killing?

A. We are not permitted to take the life of another individual except in particular circumstances which Allah has defined. Allah hasn't defined the circumstance where a person asks to be killed or when someone feels that the individual's life is uncomfortable as one of the particular circumstances that we are permitted to take someone's life.

However, if a person has died and his body can be kept alive by the use of machines, you are not Islamically required to do so but if you do, it is not considered mercy killing if you turn off the machine.

Mercy killing is where an individual has taken it into his own hands to take another person's life by the use of injection, gases, etc. this is prohibited in Islam.

Question on Islamic Law (Fiqh)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. With regards to the prohibition of gold for men, does this include gold teeth, pens and gold plated items?

A. If gold teeth are a medical necessity, then there is no harm, but if they are used as ornaments then it is prohibited. And a gold pen,

again this is a form of ornamentation and is prohibited. Gold plated items are not included in the prohibition because when we speak of gold, we speak of it as being solid gold. But of course, if something makes you appear amongst Muslims as being disobedient to Allah, these things should be avoided.

Question on Islamic Law (Fiqh)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Is it forbidden for a Muslim woman to recite the Quran in public?

A. Men are prohibited to listen to Quran recited by women because of the captivating quality of her voice, but it is acceptable for women. In the case of young girls, it is permissible for them to recite publicly, but only until the age of puberty.

Question on Islamic Law (Fiqh)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Did the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) forgive those who killed his loved ones, like Wahshee when he killed Hamza (the Prophet's Uncle)?

A. If an individual killed your father, you have the right to forgive him or except blood money from him or have his life taken. This is the option given to you, being the closest male relative to your father. (Saheeh Al-Bukharee, Vol. 9, Pg. 12, No. 19)

The right of forgiveness remains in the system of Islamic law. Forgiveness is in the hands of the male family members, if they choose to forgive, they may do so. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) didn't hold the killing of Hamza against Wahshee when he excepted Islam, because Wahshee had killed Hamza as a non-Muslim in war.

Question on Islamic Law (Fiqh)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What are the Islamic rules governing the execution of an

individual?

A. When an individual is charged with a crime, he/she is brought to court and evidence for the case is given to a panel of judges. If the individual confesses to the crime then the law is applied but if not then the judges examines the evidence, and only if they find that the evidence is not one hundred percent accurate will the law not be applied. If the judgement passed by the judges was that the law should be applied, then the case is sent to a higher court. The higher court re-examines the case again, as well as the judgements of the previous court to ensure that it is one hundred percent accurate. And if the higher court also feels that the law should be applied then the judgement is sent to the king/ruler for his approval. The case is then re-examined again to make sure that it is one hundred percent accurate and only then will the law be applied.

Question on Miscellaneous (Jews)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What should our relationship be with Jews we may come in contact with?

A. They are misguided human beings who need Islam and we must treat them in this way. It is our duty to convey Islam to them and if they reject it, we have fulfilled our duty. We can not hide the message from them and we can not be biased towards them.

In the time of the Prophet (pbuh), some of the Jews in Madinah accepted Islam and throughout history, Jews have accepted Islam. So it is our duty to convey the message to them and hope that they will see the right path.

Question on Miscellaneous (Jesus)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Are there any prophetic traditions which give us further clarifications to what happened on the so called crucifixion of Jesus and if someone else was crucified instead of him?

A. There is no authentic traditions how it took place, Allah alone knows. All that we are certain of is that the crucifixion of Jesus did not take place, as Allah said, "he was not crucified" (Soorah An-Nisa

4:157).

In the gospel of Barnabus, it explains that the image of Prophet Jesus was placed on Judas and he was crucified. Many Muslims have taken this as the explanation to what had happened because the gospel of Barnabus mentions that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) would come after Jesus. But we can not take this as the explanation because the gospel of Barnabus is no more authentic than the other gospels.

Question on Miscellaneous (Naming)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Can the name Raheema be used by a women?

A. Yes.

Question on Miscellaneous (99 Names of Allah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Where can we find the 99 names of Allah?

A. You will not find them in the back page of Qurans printed in India and Pakistan, but instead in the Quran (where the names are mentioned) and in the authentic hadeeths (Bukhari, Muslim, etc.).

Question on Non-Islamic Sects (Nation of Islam)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What is your opinion regarding the so-called Imam Warithudeen Muhammad, who is a leader of Muslims in America and is said to be an upholder of the Quran and Sunnah?

A. All of Warithudeen Muhammad's statements to date have been praising his father (Elijah Muhammad, who claimed that Allah was a man and that he was the last messenger of Allah). Warithudeen has changed most of the practices that were practiced during his father's time, but he still insists on praising his father and referring to him as

the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, "However honors a mubtadir (an innovator: one who brings something new into the religion) has helped to destroy Islam." Elijah Muhammad is the worst of mankind and he is cursed by Allah. Allah has said in the Quran, "Who is worse than the one who claims to receive revelation, has received nothing." [Soorah Al-'Anaam (Chapter 6), Verse 93], those are the worst of mankind. So to honor such a person is a major deviation.

This sums up the level of his Islam and that is how we as Muslims, should judge people. If you praise one who is cursed by Allah, then you are displeasing Allah. Part of our faith is to love those who Allah loves and hate those who Allah hates. All those who seek to praise enemies of Allah, put themselves in the category of being enemies of Allah. So, for example, an individual like Farrakhan, though he maybe a very effective and eloquent spokesman and uses the name of Islam, he is a reviver of the original teachings of Elijah Muhammad. So to even speak of him in an honorable fashion or to praise him, is a major mistake on the part of Muslims. He is a blatant enemy of Islam

Question on Prayer (Salah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What is the most appropriate method for going down into Sujud from the standing position in Prayer? Should a person go down with his hands before his knees or with his knees before his hands?

A. This issue has different opinions, where scholars have brought various evidences to support their claims. From what I have read, the only authentic tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) regarding this issue is as follows,

Aboo Hurayrah was reported to have said, that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "If any of you performs Sajdah, he should not kneel like the camel but should place his hands before his knees". (Sunan Abu Daawood, Volume 1, Book of Salah, Chapter 292, Pg. 215, Hadeeth No. 839). This position has also been recorded in "The Prophet's Prayer (pbuh) described" by Shaykh Muhammad Naasir-ud-Deen Al-Albaani.

However, there is another position that states that the knees should be placed before the hands, but it doesn't have any authentic hadeeth to support it. The holders of this position argue that according to the above-mentioned hadeeth, we should not kneel as a camel kneels.

And they state that the camel kneels with its hands before its knees, based on the linguistic meaning of the hadeeth. Scholars of hadeeth have also refuted these linguistic arguments with other linguistic arguments. However, the hadeeth clearly states, place your hands before your knees.

I believe that the most authentic practice would be to place the hands before the knees, but it does not mean that prayer becomes invalid if the knees are placed before the hands.

Question on Prayer (Salah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. If a Muslim dies in another country, are we allowed to make the Janaza prayer for him/her?

A. It is allowed to make general prayers for the individual, but according to the Sunnah, the Janaza prayer should only be made for a Muslim who has no one else to pray for him/her. In the time of the Prophet (pbuh), the Najashee (Ruler of Ethiopia) was a convert Muslim who kept his Islam a secret. When he died, an angel came to the Prophet (pbuh) and informed him of his death. The Prophet (pbuh) then commanded his companions in Madeenah to make the Janaza prayer for him, because no one knew that he was a Muslim and that meant that no one could pray for him.

Nowadays, some Muslims make the Janaza prayer even though some part of the community has already prayed for the individual. But in my opinion, such a practice would require evidence from the practice of the Prophet (pbuh) or his companions to make it an acceptable practice

Question on Prayer (Salah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. I understand that dua Al-Qunoot is to be read during the witr prayer. Is there any other duas which can be read also?

A. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) recited dua Al-Qunoot with the witr prayer on occasion but it is not a part of the witr prayer, even though Muslims today have made it a necessary part of the witr

prayer.

In the time of Umar, Imaams used to recite other duas (one dua cursing the disbelievers and a second seeking forgiveness for the believers) in the second half of Ramadan (Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah; authenticated by al-Albani [Taken from 'The Night Prayers: Qiyam & Tarawih', compiled by Muhammad al-Jibali])

Question on Prayer (Salah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. I have heard that there is a tradition in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, which states that the Athan should not be given with a musical intonation. Is this true?

A. I have not heard of such a tradition in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, but I don't say that it does not exist. As far as I know, there is no prohibition in this regard.

The Prophet (pbuh) encouraged us to recite the Quran in a melodious fashion as stated in the following tradition.

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of Allaah (pbuh) said, "Allah has not heard anything more pleasing than listening to me reciting the Quran in a sweet voice." (Saheeh Muslim Volume 1, Chapter CCLXXV, Pg. 380, Hadeeth No. 1728)

The Prophet also said that whoever does not recite the Quran in a melodious fashion is not one of us.

In present times, unfortunately, the melodious aspect has become the most important aspect of the recitation of the Quran. Where you have people reciting a verse and pause and others expressing their amazement. Different countries hold Quranic recitation competitions, where people are judged according to the melodious quality of their voice, rather than according to the tajweed and other factors of their recitation. The true goal of reciting the Quran, is to reflect on the meaning and convey the meaning to others. We should not lose sight of this goal.

In general, if we are recommended to beautify the Quran with our voices, then the Athaan, which is calling out the message of Islam, should also be beautified. As far as I know, in the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Bilal Ibn Rabah was chosen to make the Athan, because of the melodious quality of his voice.

Question on Prayer (Salah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Is it permissible to use prayers in a language other than Arabic during formal prayer?

A. If an individual has just become a Muslim and hasn't learnt the Arabic supplications in prayer then he should supplicate in his own language until he has learnt the basic structure of the prayer.

It should also be noted, that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has prescribed a set of supplications for individuals until they have learnt soorah Al-Fatiha and the other short soorahs. The supplications are 'Subhanal La' (Glory be to Allah), 'Al Hamdulil la' (All praises are due to Allah), 'La ilaaha illal la' (There is no God worthy of worship but Allah) and 'Allahu Akbar' (Allah is the Greatest).

Question on Worship (Ebaadah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. What acts of worship may we do for the dead?

A. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) specifically permitted the performing of Hajj on behalf of a relative who was unable to make it, as well as fasting on behalf of a relative who had intended to do so but was unable. Some scholars have also permitted the praying of voluntary prayers on behalf of the dead. This may be acceptable or it may not be, so the safe thing is to follow what the Prophet (pbuh) has specifically permitted. This does not mean that it is prohibited for a person to make voluntary prayer and ask Allah to give the reward to a dead person, because it has bases in the acceptance of the Hajj and fasting.

Question on Worship (Ebaadah)

Answered by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Q. Some individuals say that if you say Allah's name a certain number of times, your wish will come true. Is it bidah to mention Allah's name in this fashion?

A. Yes, this is bidah. On the market today, you will find books

containing the names of Allah, which say that if you say the name of Allah a certain number of times you will find what you lost, you will get back your job, you will have children if you don't have any and other different things. These are all lies and these book are corruption.